

Application No.: 10/602,055
Art Unit: 3739

Attorney Docket No. 9052.01
Confirmation No. 7631

REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 3-6, and cancel Claims 9-11. Claims 1-8 and 21 remain pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 4 are independent claims.

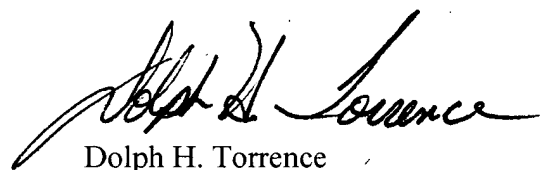
Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative during the telephonic interviews held on July 12th and July 14th of 2004. The present response summarizes the substance of the interviews. In the interview of July 12th, the Examiner proposed that Claim 1 be further amended to include additional structural features in order to define over the prior art of record. The Examiner generally suggested incorporating the subject matter of Claims 2, 3 and 5 into Claim 1. However, no agreement was reached as to whether such an amendment would be sufficient to overcome the prior art. On July 14, 2004, Applicant submitted via fax a proposed amendment for consideration by the Examiner. Proposed amended Claims 1 and 4 set forth features of the end stones. During the telephonic conversation on July 14, 2004, the Examiner acknowledged receipt of the proposed amendment, but noted that it did not place the application in condition for allowance. The Examiner seemed to indicate that Applicant's invention was patentable, but that the claims failed to define over the prior art. The present amendment is being submitted to have the Examiner fully consider the issues raised in the proposed amendment.

Application No.: 10/602,055
Art Unit: 3739

Attorney Docket No. 9052.01
Confirmation No. 7631

Independent Claims 1 and 4 have been amended to include the limitation that the plurality of stones includes two end stones, wherein each of the end stones consists of a unitary body having a single hole and two adjacent blind holes defined therein, respectively. The elongated flexible member is secured within the blind hole(s) of each of the end stones. Support for this limitation is found on pages 10-11 of the specification, and shown in Figs. 9A-9C. Independent Claims 1 and 4 have been further amended to recite that the "elongated flexible member is sufficiently stiff to keep the stones in place about the desired area of the person's body." Support for this limitation is found on page 8, last paragraph. Dependent Claim 3, 5 and 6 have been further amended to make them more coherent in light of the amendments to the independent claims. Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claims 1 and 4, as amended, and corresponding dependent Claims 2-3, 5-8 and 21 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dolph H. Torrence", written in a cursive style.

Dolph H. Torrence
Registration No. 34,501
(703) 486-1000